

VZCZCXRO9056  
PP RUEHDBU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR  
DE RUEHSF #0743/01 1700724  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 190724Z JUN 07  
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3855  
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 SOFIA 000743

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/NCE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/19/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [NATO](#) [GG](#) [BU](#)

SUBJECT: BULGARIA: EUR A/S FRIED DISCUSSES GEORGIA, KOSOVO  
AND NATO ENLARGEMENT

Classified By: DCM Alex Karagiannis, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: Valentin Radomirski, Foreign Policy Advisor to Prime Minister Stanishev, described to EUR A/S Dan Fried on June 11 Russian pressure tactics regarding Bulgarian relations with Georgia, especially regarding export of small arms and munitions to Georgia. Tbilisi's larger than normal purchase order had further complicated Sofia's decision-making. Bulgaria's response was to remove armor-piercing munitions and weapons that Moscow claims are Russian-licensed from the order, and to spread out the delivery over two years. Radomirski stressed Bulgaria supports America's commitment to an independent Kosovo accomplished through a UN Security Council Resolution. He described the "vital importance" of a peaceful Kosovo solution to the region, and expressed concern that Russia could impede this process. The meeting concluded with a discussion on the enlargement of NATO; Radomirski believes the entrance of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia should each be judged on its own merits. Specifically he stated that Macedonia first should solve its internal problems before being allowed to join NATO, while also highlighting that Macedonia is not helping itself through its actions and rhetoric on Bulgaria. END SUMMARY.

#### BULGARIA'S SOLUTION FOR ARMS SHIPMENTS TO GEORGIA

-----  
12. (C) As part of the June 12 Presidential visit to Sofia, Assistant Secretary Fried met with Valentin Radomirski, Foreign Policy Advisor to Bulgarian Prime Minister Sergei Stanishev. Radomirski reported on what have been difficult Bulgaria-Russia relations over Georgia, particularly regarding arms sales. The Russians had been quite brutal on the issue, especially regarding claims that Bulgarian weapons were Russian-licensed and hence needed Russian approval for export. During PM Stanishev's May visit to Moscow, the Russians had downplayed that licensing issue. But they continued to apply pressure on exports to Georgia, which had requested a 130 million Euro shipment of light arms and munitions. This order, which was several magnitudes larger than previous Georgian purchases, was naturally attractive to Bulgaria's military-industrial complex (and local employment). Bulgaria removed armor-piercing munitions from the order. Radomirski pointed out that neither armor-piercing rounds nor the number of arms ordered were for Georgian troops deployed to Iraq, as Georgia claimed; Bulgaria was thus cautious about Georgian motivations and requirements. Bulgaria also decided to spread out the shipment into two smaller installments of 28 million and 30 million Euro over the next two years. Radomirski described that while it is important for Bulgaria to maintain good relations with Russia, this was a significant order for

Bulgaria and it is important to allow Bulgaria's successful arms industry to continue to thrive. (NOTE: By comparison, Bulgaria's total defense exports for 2006 totaled approx. \$100m).

13. (C) Radomirski stated that he appreciates America's continued advice as Bulgaria balances arms shipments with its relations with Russia. He stated that Bulgaria is also acting out of concern for stability in Georgia and the region as a whole. Fried congratulated Bulgaria for its wisdom and prudence in reducing and stretching out the delivery. He also expressed concern regarding Georgia's 130 million Euro order; the United States would engage the Georgians as to why such a large purchase was requested in such a small time frame. We are talking privately with the Russians to act responsibly and the Georgians to be temperate.

#### PEACEFUL KOSOVO SOLUTION OF "VITAL IMPORTANCE"

-----

14. (C) Radomirski pressed the "vital importance" of a peaceful Kosovo solution for the western Balkans, describing how if Serbia "shuts down", Bulgaria would lose its primary land link to Western Europe. He agreed with A/S Fried that supervised independence for Kosovo through a UN Security Council Resolution is ideal, recognizing we faced a possible Russian veto that if enacted would unsettle the whole region.

He suggested America can usefully focus on guarantees for Serbs in Kosovo, which can help defuse nationalist sentiments and perhaps gain Russian support. Bulgaria continues to talk to the Serbs about eventual NATO and/or EU membership. He also stressed the importance that the international community stick to its principled stand on status and standards regarding Kosovo. Once Kosovo had status, it must fulfill

SOFIA 00000743 002 OF 002

standards. Neither Kosovo nor Serbia could become regional black holes.

15. (C) Fried related the elements of Sarkozy's proposal to Radomirski as they were discussed at the G-8 meeting. He described how the Russians would likely disagree with several points and that a UN Security Council Resolution would remain a challenge. Radomirski reiterated that "we are behind the Ahtisaari plan" and that Bulgaria will continue working for a peaceful solution to the Kosovo issue. He described Bulgarian frustration at Russian muscle-flexing which risked creating new instabilities in the Balkans. And he stressed the importance of status and standards for Kosovo.

#### CONCERNS OVER MACEDONIA'S ENTRANCE INTO NATO

-----

16. (C) Conversation concluded on NATO enlargement. A/S Fried related how President Bush welcomes "a real consultation" with Bulgaria on the admission of Croatia, Albania, and Macedonia. Croatia has made genuine progress; Albania and Macedonia need to do much more. Radomirski agreed with Fried that the consequences of granting membership to one or two of the nations but not the other(s) must be considered carefully. Radomirski focused on Macedonia. He stated that while each country should be judged on its own merits, Macedonia needs to solve its own internal problems before entering NATO. Political infighting and ethnic issues are still bubbling. Macedonia has an open issue with Greece. But Macedonian politicians -- and members of the government -- are also making provocative statements about relations with Bulgaria, whether about ethnic minorities or human rights or even (among the more wild-eyed) territorial pretensions. Even if more form than substance, the level and frequency of such irritants is such that it would pose political difficulties for Bulgaria to support Macedonia's NATO membership if left unresolved. Fried pushed back, but agreed that Macedonia must do more to meet NATO standards. Beyrle